3/3/69

Dear Gary,

Re you let 2/28: I have learned from friends in the press that Louis finally called Tom in last week and fired him and counselled him to get out of town. I twice tried to speak to Moo today. The first time we had just started to talk when he got a call from Jim he had to take and the second time he said he was busy and I believe it, because as he picked up the phone I heard him speaking as though to Alcock. I do presume they have much to talk about and that it is pressing. So, until I can find out more, I can only wonder. Moo did ask that I (we) not say anything about it. Presumeably Jim will, in his way and time. However, I am anxious to know to whom he gave this stuff or for whom he was working, as it can be vital to all of us. That Vince did not tell you is incredible, for it is part and parcel of the only-father-knows-and-understands attitude that has been so close to ruinous and reflects what, almost without exception and to his knowledge, has been so wrong. Here I am, having ~~tim~~ tried to get them interested in realizing that he undoubtedly was working for the other side, with proof that he was helping it, with every other reason to suspect him - having a year ago insisted as a condition of my ever giving them anything it not get to him - having even tried to interest Vince in doing something about him in December (Vince had a preference for arguing with him about his beliefs and public statements) - and the one person who cannot be trusted with this knowledge, when the press is - is guess who?

The only thing Finck added to the record is that it was "suggested" they not dissect, which is practically what I said anyway, and is in the existing record I have made, and the name of Admiral Kinney (see enclosed). The rest is all in my published work. Aside from Vince having read it when you did in PM, there were three copies there, plus citations to my earlier autopsy writing. More, I have just learned, from the press, that Nichols stayed there throughout. He also read it, knew the backstopping in documents (which were also there) and I had discussed just these aspects with him at great length, on several occasions. He had been entirely unaware of them. Matter of fact, after first reading - when he just glanded at - this book, he undertook to get medical auspicies for it, including serialization in the AMA Journal. No, the importance of the Finck testimony is different and limited. Here is is crucially important. It is that it <u>is</u> testimony, was adduced in a court of law, was subject to examination by the other side, and was the responsibility of the other side. Thank God for their stupidity in trying to understake the defense of the Warren Report. Without that stupidity, we would not have this because of the mixed incompetence/paranoia in New Orleans.

Vince is wrong in telling you the reporters in the courtroom stopped writing when Tadim took the stand. The fact is I got a more complete account from listening to CBS and from the antagonistic Washington Post (using wire-service copy) than from the New Orleans papers, which did give it much space. CBS even quoted him (or the Post did) as saying "Oh, Christ" when he saw Shaw with Ferrie because he knew Shaw to be a notorious homosexual. There is absolutely no doubt about the dishonesty of the press, but there is also no doubt that in this case, the skepticism and treatment were earned. Even our friends in the press felt this way. I have heard and still do hear from them about it. That attitude, I repeat, is paranoid. This was our chance for access to the press when it could not be completely avoided, and it was blown. The reason the Tadims came forth was also given at great length, on radio and TV, in the Post.

I agree Phelan did essentially what Vince quotes them as saying he did. I have seen some of that evidence. If it is admissable, I think it is less than airtight. If they can get to court, they have a better case against both Sheridan and Townley, and I think Sheridan is the really important one. We have given them more on this, despite their reluctance to return calls for weeks at a time, noe one else, naturally, being busy, only they. Had Vince, for example,

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even a single time, they would have known. They could not use it in this trial until Andrews was a witness. That made it admissable, and would it have been dynamite. Someone reputable overheard the pitch to Andrews, by Sheridan.

He certainly should have been in touch with me on the autopsy stuff at the very least, for you do not know what is missing from that testimony. If I was willing to give it ~~xx~~ away, he was unwilling to acknowledge how disasterously wrong he was on the Washington angle. Had he called me anout any of the witnesses, knowing how much work I did in New Orleans, while I do not think the decision would or should have been changed, the record and the press would and could have been different. For example, Cobb, who testified Shaw's resignation had been "entirely voluntary", and Shaw's repetition of it, are perjurious. Can you imagine, springing on Shaw during his cross-examination, that he had actually been fired and that Cobb, personally had done it? Cobb hated him. One need only have paid attention to the false testimony to gather this. Cobb had an annual, very big affair at his ranch, yet in not less than 10 years this "close associate" had him there only two or three times, not since 1962? Yet, fascinatingly enough, Cobb, not his lawyers, sought the handwriting expert. When Shaw said he "never worked harder", it may interest you to know this is without meaning, for he never, ever, worked hard. There is, in the N.O. files, from both Paul and me, documentary disproof of this angle, for Lawrence, of the Bloomfield Company, was working on that in New Orleans as early as the day of Oswald's picketing of the ITN, 8/16/63. More, there is the business of the LAR, opened up in the testimony of Shaw s former secretary. Gary, it is right and proper that you be true to a friend, but Vince bears a very heavy responsibility for so much of what is so wrong. Why may be a reason and in my mind is, but not the fact of it. The demoralization in the staff is in large part attributable to him. Read Kevin in the current AIC letter.

When I have more time I'll respond to your question, what did Rothermel mean. I have to get another letter done before I pick Lil up and it is now 4 p.m.

I feel comstrained to make an additional comment about Vince and his and their wanting me there. I phoned him well before I was comepelled to leave and told him I would not be able to return without help. He was and remained satisfied. Yet he is the one who had made the unkept arrangements, and if he felt unwilling to pay the cost himself, he could have advanced it until it was returned. I go into these things unwillingly but I feel compelled to. I made it explicit to him and Maggie, that I did not ever want anyone point an accusing finger at me for not being there. Thought I was not hopeful and did want to do other things(I was already doing them in N.O.), I would have remained and this was explicit. You have first-hand information, well before the fact, well before the crisis that eventuated. I think that in the end this will turn out to be one of the more costly things, this and what was so wrong about what had to be done, but not the way it was, in December. We could not prepare all the things missing from their case, not at that late moment. But we could have made what they had and did much better. Their case is openly controlled by paranois, as is their calling and not calling of witnesses, and this utter nonsense of everything and everybody being an agent lies at the rotting root.

We are concerned not with inner intentions, but with realities. The realities are unpleasant. They do not become less so by being ignored. We now have to worry about what will next be done, for there much that probably should be and much that should not, and I wonder whose voice is being heard, where there is a dependable counterweight, where, in fact, there is anyone who has more than a glimmer of some of the fact.

Hurriedly,

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